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Attitudes Toward Financial Assistance to
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STUDIES TOWARD FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO POST-SECONDARY STUDENTS



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APPENDIX

Governments face the public demand for more and more assistance to post-secondary students. As public education at the post-secondary level becomes more costly, the demand by students and their parents for more financial assistance increases. There must be increases to meet these demands. In making policy decisions regarding these increases, governments must be sensitive to attitudes of the public and of specific interest groups. This study looks at attitudes toward financial assistance to post-secondary students.

The study is part of a larger research program undertaken in 1968-69 by the Students Assistance Board, Alberta Department of Education for the purpose of examining present and future needs in the granting of financial assistance to post-secondary students in Alberta institutions.

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PREFACE

Governments find themselves caught between the public demand for more and more services and reluctance on the part of the same public to see taxes increase to meet these demands. As public education at the post-secondary level becomes more costly, the demand by students and their parents for more financial assistance increases. Taxes must be increased to meet these demands. In making policy decisions regarding these matters, governments must be sensitive to attitudes of the public and of specific interested groups. This study looks at attitudes toward financial assistance to post-secondary students.

The study is part of a larger research program undertaken in 1968-69 by the Students Assistance Board, Department of Education for the purpose of reviewing present policies and practices in the granting of financial assistance to students in post-secondary educational institutions.

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The sample of 673 students was randomly chosen from all students who received assistance in the 1967-68 year. Table I gives the distribution of students by institution and the numbers and percentages of return for each institution. Usual follow-up procedures were used to calculate the percentages of return; the numbers and percentages of return when all three questionnaires after follow-up procedures were carried out will be noted that just under two-thirds of the students completed questionnaires, with the highest percent return, 46.22, being from the university of Alberta, and the lowest return from CFCU, 33.63.

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION AND PLAN OF STUDY

As the costs of education continue to rise, the issue of revenue sources becomes of more and more concern. Part of this concern is with the extent to which students and their parents should be expected to assume more and more responsibility for the costs of post-secondary education. Alternatively, are the benefits to society such that the taxpayer should pay an increasing proportion of the cost? If the responsibility is to be shared between the student and his parents, and the taxpayer, how can this sharing of costs best be determined? More specifically, what form should the assistance take and what should be the balance between repayable and non-repayable aid? Should there be limits on the types and amount of aid given to students?

This study is an attempt to look at attitudes of four groups of persons regarding some of these questions by means of a questionnaire. The four groups are:

- a. a sample of students from various post-secondary institutions who received financial assistance in 1967-68
- b. a sample of parents of these students
- c. a sample of general public
- d. a group of persons more or less directly involved in or concerned with financial aid, including financial aid officers in post-secondary institutions, high school guidance department heads, student union presidents, and government personnel involved in administration of student assistance.

The sample of 673 students was randomly chosen from all students who received assistance in the 1967-68 year. Table I gives the distribution of students by institution and the numbers and percentages of return for each institution. Usual follow-up procedures were used to increase the percentage of returns; the numbers and percentages of return given are those obtained after follow-up procedures were carried out. It will be noted that just under two-thirds of the students completed questionnaires, with the highest percent return 68.2%, being from the University of Alberta, and the lowest return from nurses, 53.6%.

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Table 1
 Numbers of Students and the Institutions Attended
 along with the Numbers and Percentages of
 Return of Questionnaire

	Number of Students Included in Sample	Number of Returns	% Returns
University of Alberta	324	221	68.2%
University of Calgary	125	71	56.8
University of Lethbridge	16	10	62.5
Out of Province University Students	64	42	65.6
Junior Colleges	31	19	61.3
Nurses	28	15	53.6
Northern Alberta Institute of Technology	58	35	60.3
Southern Alberta Institute of Technology	27	15	55.6

The questionnaire was sent also to 528 of the parents of the 673 students used in the study. There were fewer parents than students because some students were independent of their parents and hence did not report parental data. Other students applied for and received scholarships only and also were not required to provide information regarding parents. Other students failed to give complete names and addresses of parents, or their parents were deceased, separated, or divorced, etc. After follow-up, 308, or 58.3% of the parents completed the questionnaires.

The sample of general public consisted of 500 persons chosen from the telephone directories to be somewhat representative of the province. The sample contained 284 persons from Edmonton and Calgary (57% of the 500 in the sample); the remaining 216, or 43%, were scattered across the province and included persons from farms, villages, towns, and small cities. After follow-up only 155 completed questionnaires, or 31% of the sample, were received. Of these 80, or 52% of the 155 received, were from Edmonton and Calgary, and the remaining 75, or 48% were from other locations. The possibility of non-response bias is present in all four of these groups, but especially so here.

The final sample consisted of 60 persons more or less directly involved with financial aid to student, including government personnel in administration of financial assistance, financial aid officers in post-secondary institutions, high school guidance department heads, and student union presidents in post-secondary institutions. After follow-up, 50, or 83.3%, of the questionnaires were returned. This was the highest percent return for all the groups. For the sake of brevity, this group will be referred to as "awards officers" throughout the report.

A copy of the questionnaire used in the study is included in Appendix A. The first twenty-six questions of the questionnaire were common for all four groups, with the remaining one to three items being different for the different groups as given in Appendix A. It will be noted that the questionnaire items were set up in such a way as to facilitate easy checking of the desired response, with space for any comments which the person completing the questionnaire might like to include. Results of the questionnaire item are reported in the following chapters, and include both the more objective item responses as well as the most frequently provided comments. The initial draft of the questionnaire was administered to a sample of students and their parents as a check on readability and appropriateness of items, and the final draft reflects suggestions made by these groups for revision.

A scanning of the questionnaire items will reveal that they tend to group around the four main headings:

- a. policy regarding responsibility for financing education beyond high school
- b. parental contribution to post-secondary education
- c. loans, including the possible limits on loans
- d. grant-loan considerations

Results of the study are reported under these four main headings.

Chapter II
Family and/or Societal Responsibilities for
Financing Education Beyond High School

Many provincial governments maintain that the primary responsibility for financing education beyond high school rests with the parents and the student. Question 1, of the questionnaire asked respondents to indicate their degree of agreement or disagreement with this policy; the data are presented in Table 2. For the sake of simplicity, only the percentage of respondents in each category is given along with the total number of respondents in each group. This format was used throughout all of the tables to follow.

Examination of the data in Table 2 reveals a somewhat greater tendency for awards officers over the other groups to agree with the policy stated. Two-thirds of the awards officers either agreed or strongly agreed with the policy, whereas the corresponding percentages for the general public, parents, and students were approximately 54%, 46%, and 44% respectively. Few persons in any group found themselves in the undecided category. The views within each group on this question were obviously not consistent, however. That is, substantial proportions of persons in each group showed some measure of agreement and another substantial portion showed a measure of disagreement. For example, of the parents group, some 46% agree or strongly agreed with the policy and approximately 50% disagreed in some measure with the policy. Comments volunteered by the respondents showed this same tendency for polarity of views to occur. For example, for the student group, 35 students stated that society alone should be responsible for post-secondary education, and 25 students stated that the student alone should be responsible for his post-secondary education costs. Another 32 students stated that society is in third position of responsibility after the parents and the student, and a further 29 students stated that individual factors such as the age of the student, the size of the family, and other family circumstances should be the deciding factor. The most frequent comments given by parents were the following: society alone should be responsible for post-secondary education (10 parents), and both society and students should be responsible for the cost of post-secondary education (6 parents). The overall conclusion one can draw from these results is that there is considerable variations in views on the matter of primary responsibility for meeting costs of post-secondary education.

Question 2 approached the same issue in a slightly different way. In this item the respondent was asked to react to the following statement: "Parents, if family circumstances permit, should be expected to pay a major portion of their children's post-secondary education costs". The data for this question are given in Table 3. All four groups showed a higher level of agreement with this statement than was true for Question 1. Four out of five parents, general public, and awards officers

Table 2
 Attitudes Toward Parents and Student Responsibility
 for Financing Post-Secondary Education

Question 1

The policy of many provincial governments is that the primary responsibility for financing education beyond high school rests with the parents and the student. How do you react to this policy?

	Students N=424	Parents N=306	General Public N=153	Awards Officers N=50	Total Group N=933
1. strongly agree	4.7%	9.8%	20.3%	14.0%	N=933
2. agree	38.9	35.9	33.3	52.0	37.7
3. undecided	3.5	4.6	3.9	2.0	3.9
4. disagree	37.7	36.6	30.1	24.0	35.4
5. strongly disagree	15.1	13.1	12.4	8.0	13.6

Table 3
 Reaction to Statement That Parents, Should be
 Expected to Pay a Major Portion of Their
 Children's Post-Secondary Education Costs

Question 2

React to the following statement: Parents, if family circumstances permit, should be expected to pay a major portion of their children's post-secondary education costs.

	Students N=425	Parents N=308	General Public N=154	Awards Officers N=50	Total Group N=937
1. strongly agree	12.0%	15.9%	27.9%	22.0%	16.4%
2. agree	45.2	64.6	55.8	56.0	53.9
3. undecided	7.3	2.9	2.6	6.0	5.0
4. disagree	27.3	14.6	9.7	16.0	19.6
5. strongly disagree	8.2	1.9	3.9	0.0	5.0

showed either strong agreement or agreement with the statement whereas close to three out of five students showed some measure of agreement. The definite conclusion of these results is that parents who are in a position to be able to assist their children with post-secondary education are believed to have a responsibility to do so.

The question of sources of parental contribution was considered in Question 28 of the questionnaire to parents. The data are presented in Table 4. Just half of the parents indicated regular income as a major source of money. Fewer than one parent in eight reported the money had come from savings specifically set aside for this purpose, or from general savings and assets such as property, stocks, etc., or from loans taken out. Eight of the parents reported that their son or daughter found part-time employment in order to pay tuition, thus reducing the actual parental contribution. In a few cases the mother went to work especially to raise money to meet the need, and in a few other cases the father earned extra money by taking on additional work.

The issue of financial independence of the family was dealt with in Question 25. The data are presented in Table 5. Of the total group of respondents, two in five tended to reject fixed criteria for determining financial independence, preferring instead an examination of an individual's particular circumstances. One person in eight in the total group of respondents felt that students should not be expected to be financially independent of parents as long as they were attending post-secondary institutions. Interestingly enough the general public and parent groups gave this response about two to three times as frequently as the student group. Fifteen students commented that financial independence should be based on the quality of the parent-student relationship -- if poor, the student should be considered independent of the parent for financial assessment purposes! Eleven students commented that an arbitrary definition of financial independence is not possible -- some students are never mature enough for such independence! On the other hand, eight students claimed that the student should have independence when he wants it! It would seem apparent from the comments that some students see financial independence of the parents to be closely allied to general independence on the part of the student, and don't wish to have financial links with the family. Few parents commented on this issue. Of those who did, six stated that the student should be considered independent after he has obtained his first degree and has earning power.

Table 4
Sources of Parental Contribution

Question 28

Students Assistance Board records indicate that you have one or more children who received financial assistance in the 1967-68 year. The amount of assistance given was based in part upon an expected contribution from you. From what sources did this contribution come? Mark the three most important sources.

	Parents N=286
1. regular income	43.1%
2. savings specifically set aside	11.9
3. general savings and other assets (property, stocks, etc.)	10.5
4. loan from bank or other agency	12.3
5. mother went to work specifically for this purpose	10.2
6. father took an extra job or worked longer hours	9.1
7. other - please explain under "comments"	2.8

Table 5
Opinions Regarding Conditions for Financial
Independence from Parents

Question 25

In your opinion, when should an individual be considered as financially independent of his parents as far as paying the cost of post-secondary education is concerned.

	Students N=425	Parents N=304	General Public N=153	Awards Officers N=50	Total Group N=445
1. At the start of post-secondary education.	7.8%	5.4%	5.3%	3.9%	6.5%
2. At age 18.	2.3	2.1	2.9	0.0	2.2
3. At age 21.	11.4	8.3	5.3	10.5	8.9
4. When he or she is no longer living at home.	12.2	9.0	7.8	15.8	10.7
5. When he or she get married.	18.7	14.7	14.5	11.8	16.5
6. He or she should not be expected to be financially independent as long as he or she is going to post-secondary school.	6.6	18.7	16.0	11.8	11.9
7. It depends on the individuals particular situation.	34.1	40.9	44.7	39.5	38.0
8. A combination of the above or other.	7.1	0.9	3.5	6.8	5.3

A large proportion of all four groups agree that no student should have to interrupt his post-secondary education for financial reasons as shown in Table 6. Combining the strongly agree and agree categories the percentages are: Students - 90.4%; Parents - 84.2%; General Public - 78.0%; Awards Officers - 78.7%; and Total Group - 85.7%. It is not surprising that students feel this a little more strongly than do persons in the other groups because of their direct involvement. Some 71 persons (31 students, 23 parents, 11 general public, 6 awards officers) commented that interruption of education should depend upon the nature of the financial reasons, and that poor student effort or extravagance should be cause for denying further aid. Thirteen students commented that interruption is unnecessary because the government provides adequate assistance. An additional thirteen students commented that the effect of interruption of education varies with the student -- in some cases motivation for education may be destroyed, but in other cases a year off to grow up would increase motivation.

The students were asked to indicate the adequacy of the assistance granted to them and the importance of the assistance given. (Question 27 and 29 of the Student Questionnaire) Tables 7 and 8 provide their data. Seven out of ten students felt the aid was adequate, one quarter stated it was inadequate, and 3.2% stated the aid was more than adequate to cover their needs. Some seventeen of the students who stated that the aid was inadequate gave as reasons: poor budgeting, social pressure, unexpected expense, and cost of out of province trips. Thirty students commented that aid covered educational needs well and that the repayment policy was fair.

Close to half of the students stated that they could not have continued their education without the assistance given, and an additional two students in five would have been hard pressed to get by without it. (Table 8) Taken together these categories include 86% of the students. Table 9 presents the opinions of parents on the importance of the aid to their son or daughter. Close to four out of five parents stated that their assistance either made further education immediately possible for their children, or removed extreme financial pressure. It is obvious that the financial assistance program is meeting a real need.

The elimination of tuition fees at the post-secondary school level has been suggested as a way of reducing the cost of education for the student and his parents. This would have the effect, of course, of increasing the cost to the general taxpayer. The opinion of the four groups used in this study to possible elimination of tuition fees was sought on Question 23. The data are presented in Table 10. Of the total group, 70.4% either disagree or strongly disagree with elimination of tuition fees. The between group variability was only 10%, ranging from 66.3% of the students disagreeing with elimination of fees to 76.8% of the general public with this view. The percentages on agree and strongly agree

Table 6
Attitude Toward Interruption of Post-Secondary
Education for Financial Reasons

Question 24

React to the following statement: No student should have to interrupt his or her post-secondary education for financial reasons.

	Students N=425	Parents N=304	General Public N=150	Awards Officers N=47	Total Group N=926
1. strongly agree	61.9%	39.1%	38.0%	29.8%	48.9%
2. agree	28.5	45.1	40.0	48.9	36.8
3. undecided	2.1	3.6	6.7	2.1	3.3
4. disagree	5.2	10.2	10.7	12.8	8.1
5. strongly agree	1.4	0.0	2.0	4.3	1.2
6. other comments	0.9	2.0	2.7	2.1	1.6

Table 7
Student Statement on Adequacy of Financial
Assistance Received

Question 27

Students Assistance Board records indicate that you received financial assistance during 1967-68. In your opinion, was the assistance you were given, inadequate, adequate to cover needs or more than adequate to cover needs?

	Student N=408
1. inadequate	26.2%
2. adequate to cover needs	70.6
3. more than adequate to cover needs	3.2

Table 8
Student Statement on Importance of
Financial Assistance Received

Question 29

Which of the following statements best describes your opinion of the importance of the assistance given you?

	Students N=407
1. I could not have continued my education without the assistance given.	46.4%
2. The assistance was a great help and I would have been hard-pressed to get by without it.	39.6
3. I could have managed without assistance but it did make finances a little less pressured.	8.4
4. The assistance was not really needed but it was nice to have.	3.2
5. Other - please explain under "comments"	2.5

Table 9
Parental Statement on Importance of Financial
Assistance Granted to Son or Daughter

Question 29

Which of the following statements best describes your opinion of the importance of assistance given your son or daughter?

	Parents N=282
1. Our son or daughter could not have attended a post-secondary institute without the assistance.	35.1%
2. The assistance was a great help and we would have been hard-pressed without it.	41.8
3. We could have managed without assistance but it did make finances a little less pressured.	17.7
4. The assistance was not really needed but it was nice to have.	2.5
5. Other - please explain under " comments ".	2.8

Table 10
 Attitude Toward Possible Elimination of
 Tuition Fees

Question 23

Some people argue that student tuition fees in post-secondary institutions should be eliminated and that this cost should be borne entirely by the taxpayer. How do you feel about this?

	Students N=421	Parents N=301	General Public N=151	Awards Officers N=48	Total Group N=921
1. strongly agree	11.6%	7.0%	9.9%	4.2%	9.4%
2. agree	12.1	13.3	6.6	18.8	11.9
3. undecided	10.0	7.0	6.6	4.2	8.1
4. disagree	43.0	54.5	39.1	43.8	46.1
5. strongly disagree	23.3	18.3	37.7	29.2	24.3

combined for the four groups were: Students - 23.7%; Parents - 20.3%; General Public - 16.5%; Awards Officers - 23.0%; and Total Group - 21.3%. Proportionately more than twice as many students as general public would like to see tuition fees eliminated. Interestingly enough, the attitude of parents on this issue is more like that of awards officers and the general public than like that of the students, their own sons and daughters.

Written comments on the issue of elimination of tuition fees were interesting. Thirty-eight students, seven parents, three general public group, and two awards officers stated that taxpayers have enough to pay for and tuition fees are a bargain. Forty-nine persons (29 students, 11 parents, 4 general public, 5 awards officers) commented that students value what they contribute toward and therefore tuition fees should not be eliminated. Another 18 students, 3 parents, and 3 general public stated that no fees would require more stringent admission policies, otherwise some students would just take up space. On the other hand, twenty-three persons (15 students, 7 parents, and 1 from general public) recommended that fees should be either lowered or kept stable.

This chapter will conclude with the issue of societal and individual benefits from post-secondary education. Opinions were sought on Question 26 of the questionnaire; the data are presented in Table 11. Of the total group, one person in twelve believed that society benefited most, whereas proportionately twice as many, 17%, believed the individual benefits most. The largest proportion, 43.7%, felt that society and the individual benefit equally and an additional 28.6% noted that the question was difficult to answer because of the inseparability of society and the individual. Between group comparisons reveal a greater tendency for the general public compared to the other three groups to believe the individual benefits the most. The most frequent appearing comment (25 students, 5 parents, 3 general public) was that society can benefit only to the extent that the individual uses his education. Twenty-five persons (18 students, 2 parents, and 5 general public) felt that the individual benefits more by raising his socio-cultural-economic level, whereas society doesn't change much. Ten students, one parent, four general public, and two awards officers pointed out that the form of benefits differs for each. Individual benefits are immediate and easier to measure than the long-range benefits to society.

In general, the data of this chapter clearly lead to the conclusion that both society and the individual are believed to benefit from post-secondary education and that both should contribute to the cost. Some variation of views exist among the groups questioned, but their similarities are more obvious than their differences.

Table 11
 Opinion Regarding Societal and Individual
 Benefits of Post-Secondary Education

Question 26

Opinions appear to differ about whether it is society or the individual that stands to gain from post-secondary education. Some feel that it is the individual who benefits the most, others feel it is society, and still others claim that the individual and society benefit equally. What do you think?

	Students N=406	Parents N=295	General Public N=149	Awards Officers N=50	Total Group N=900
1. Society benefits the most.	9.9%	5.4%	9.4%	6.0%	8.1%
2. The individual benefits the most.	16.5	13.2	26.2	16.0	17.0
3. Society and the individual benefit equally.	43.3	49.8	37.6	28.0	43.7
4. Society and the individual are so inseparable that such a question cannot be answered.	26.4	29.5	25.5	50.0	28.6
5. no opinion	3.9	2.0	1.3	0.0	2.7

Chapter III

PARENTAL CONTRIBUTION TO POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Assuming that parents can reasonably be expected to contribute to the post-secondary education of their children, the question arises as to the basis for assessing parental contribution. Question 3 through 9 of the questionnaire attempted to get opinions on issues in this area.

Question 3 asked for degree of agreement or disagreement on the use of annual taxable income of parents as the basis for assessment of contribution; the data are presented in Table 12. Over two thirds of the total group agreed or strongly agreed, whereas just under one quarter disagreed or strongly disagreed with use of the annual income for this purpose. There is little variation in response from one group to another within the total group. Sixty-four persons (51 student, 10 parents, and 3 general public) suggested that the assessment should consider such factors as family crises, the number of children, family debts, and chronic illness of parent. Another 16 persons (7 parents, 2 general public, and 7 award officers) recommended that a special formula should be used for farming and self-employed business people for urban income fluctuates considerably. Eleven students, 6 parents, and 5 general public expressed concern that many parents can easily conceal substantial portions of their income, thus reducing the expected contribution to their sons' or daughters' education. Despite the difficulties noted, it is apparent that a substantial majority of the persons questioned believed annual taxable income should be the basis of assessment of parental contribution.

Should there be a minimum level of taxable income below which parents would not be expected to contribute to their children's post-secondary education, and what should this minimum level be? These issues are dealt with in Questions 4 and 5, and the data are presented in Tables 13 and 14. The vast majority, 86.1%, of the total group believe that low income parents should be exempted, with between group variability ranging from 75.3% for the general public group to 90.3% for the student group. Twenty-four persons (14 students, 7 parents, 2 general public, and 1 awards officers) felt that parents should contribute as much as possible regardless of low income, and should plan for this expense. Other comments made included the suggestion that the minimum level of income considered should vary with home location, and low income parents often, contribute proportionately more than those with higher incomes.

Table 12
Taxable Income as Basis for Assessing
Expected Parental Contribution

Question 3

The basis for assessing the expected contribution from parents should be the total annual taxable income of the parents from all sources. (Taxable income is not total earnings. It is the amount of income remaining after all allowable deductions, for example, for dependents, charitable donations etc., have been made.) How do you feel about this?

	Students N=420	Parents N=306	General Public N=153	Awards Officers N=50	Total Group N=929
1. strongly agree	13.1%	12.4%	21.6%	14.0%	14.3%
2. agree	50.7	59.5	50.3	56.0	53.8
3. undecided	11.4	6.2	7.2	6.0	8.7
4. disagree	17.6	17.6	12.4	18.0	16.8
5. strongly disagree	7.1	4.2	8.5	6.0	6.4

Table 13
Exemption of Contribution from
Low Income Parents

Question 4

In your opinion, should parents be exempted from contribution if their taxable income falls below a certain limit?

	Students N=412	Parents N=298	General Public N=146	Awards Officers N=48	Total Group N=904
1. Yes	90.3%	85.6%	75.3%	85.4%	86.1%
2. No	9.7	14.4	24.7	14.6	13.9

Table 14
 Lower Limit of Parental Taxable Income for
 Possible Exemption from Parental
 Contribution

Question 5

If you answered yes in question four, what should this lower limit be?

	Students N=342	Parents N=227	General Public N=109	Awards Officers N=39	Total Group N=717
1. \$200	2.6%	0.9%	0.0%	2.6%	1.7%
2. \$300	2.3	1.8	2.8	2.6	2.2
3. \$500	4.7	7.5	5.5	5.1	5.7
4. \$750	2.0	5.3	4.6	2.6	3.5
5. \$1000	8.8	7.9	9.2	12.8	8.8
6. \$1500	7.0	6.6	8.3	7.7	7.1
7. \$2000	9.6	16.3	11.0	12.8	12.1
8. \$2500	19.6	19.4	25.7	28.2	20.9
9. other	20.2	18.5	20.2	20.5	19.7
10. no opinion	23.1	15.9	12.8	5.1	18.3

Considerable variability in suggested lower limit of taxable income for exemption from contribution is evident within groups but not among groups in Table 14. In the total group, one person in five felt the lower limit should be set at \$2500, one in twelve would set it at \$2000, another 7.1% would set it at \$1500, and 8.8% at \$1000. One person in eight, 13.1%, would set the lower limit at \$750 or less. One person in five suggested lower limits ranging from \$3000 to \$10,000, or felt that setting a limit was impractical because too many factors were involved. A frequent comment was that the lower limit should depend on the number and age of dependents, and should allow for debts to be paid, and accumulation of reasonable savings for emergencies.

The possibility of setting a maximum expected parental contribution regardless of income was studied in Questions 6 and 7 of the questionnaire, and reported in Tables 15 and 16. Just over half of the total group felt there should be no maximum amount of parental contribution, an additional one person in eight was undecided on the issue, and three persons in ten believed there should be a limit. (Table 15) Between group variability is evident, with more of the parents and general public suggesting a maximum limit than was true for the students and awards officers. From Table 16, it is evident that there was little agreement among those who felt there should be a maximum limit just what that limit should be, and about one third of the total group had no opinion to give. Eighty-three persons (38 students, 37 parents, 6 general public, and 2 awards officers) stated that parents should pay the total costs or as much as they can afford in order to leave funds for those in need. Thirty students, 6 parents, 2 general public, and 1 awards officers felt that a maximum was unrealistic, and that the amount of parental contribution should depend upon the individual situation, including size of family, job opportunities, and so forth.

Question 8 asked if the respondent could suggest bases other than taxable income for determining parental contribution; the proportions of response are given in Table 17. Only one person in five in the total group could suggest another basis for assessment. However nearly two in five of the awards officers, and just over a quarter of the general public stated they could suggest alternate bases. The most frequently stated alternate bases for parental contribution were: net worth of parent, value of capital investments, gross income, voluntary statement by parent of what he can contribute, and parental contribution over the years to an "education insurance" plan.

The final question raised regarding parental contribution, Question 9, related to the possible requirement of a parental statement of income and expenditures to be examined in assessing expected parental contribution. As revealed in Table 18, six out of ten persons in the total group, 62.3%, either agreed or strongly agreed with such a requirement whereas just under a third, 31.6%, either disagreed or strongly disagreed. The range of response among groups ranged from 71.4% agreement for the awards officers group to 56.8% for the student group. Two thirds of both the

Table 15
 Attitude Toward Possible Maximum
 Parental Contribution

Question 6

Should there be a maximum amount that parents, including those who could afford to pay the total cost, be expected to contribute towards their children's education beyond high school?

	Students N=420	Parents N=299	General Public N=149	Awards Officers N=50	Total Group N=918
1. yes	23.6%	38.1%	43.0%	20.0%	31.3%
2. undecided	11.9	13.7	10.1	14.0	12.3
3. no	64.5	48.2	47.0	66.0	56.4

Table 16
Proposed Maximum Parental Contribution Per Year

Question 7

If you agree with number six, what should this maximum be for each year?

	Students N=160	Parents N=136	General Public N=75	Awards Officers N=11	Total Group N=382
1. less than \$200	5.0%	2.9%	2.7%	0.0%	3.7%
2. between \$200-\$400	6.3	12.5	9.3	0.0	8.9
3. between \$400-\$600	11.3	15.4	8.0	9.1	12.0
4. between \$600-\$800	7.5	5.9	8.0	0.0	6.8
5. between \$800-\$1000	8.1	11.0	13.3	36.4	11.0
6. between \$1000-\$1200	6.9	6.6	6.7	0.0	6.5
7. between \$1200-\$1500	3.8	4.4	9.3	9.1	5.2
8. more than \$1500	1.3	0.7	1.3	9.1	1.3
9. other	15.6	6.6	12.0	27.3	12.0
10. no opinion	34.4	33.8	29.3	9.1	32.5

Table 17
Possibility of Alternate Basis for Assessing
Parental Contribution

Question 8

Could you suggest a way or ways other than taxable income in which parental contribution might be determined? If yes, briefly describe method and indicate how much this contribution should be.

	Students N=381	Parents N=248	General Public N=122	Awards Officers N=41	Total Group N=792
1. yes	22.8%	16.1%	27.0%	39.0%	22.2%
2. no	77.2	83.9	73.0	61.0	77.8

Table 18
Attitude Toward Use of Parental Budget
in Assessing Parental Contribution

Question 9

How would you react to the following statement? "In awarding financial assistance a parental statement of income and of expenditures, as well as a student budget, should be examined by the awarding committee in order to determine parental contribution."

	Students N=415	Parents N=295	General Public N=147	Awards Officers N=49	Total Group N=906
1. strongly agree	17.3%	13.6%	23.1%	22.4%	17.3%
2. agree	39.5	52.9	43.5	49.0	45.0
3. undecided	6.3	5.8	6.1	4.1	6.0
4. disagree	21.4	16.3	15.6	14.3	18.4
5. strongly disagree	15.4	11.5	11.6	10.2	13.2

parents and general public agreed with this requirement. Fifty-seven persons (43 students, 11 parents, and 3 general public) commented that student budgets only should be examined, that parental budget is of no concern to government or awards officers. Eleven students, 4 parents, and 1 awards officer felt that parental budgets were unreliable and should not be the sole basis for determining parental contribution.

Chapter IV

LOAN CONSIDERATIONS

A large portion of the financial assistance granted to students in Alberta is through loans, either from the Canada Student Loan Plan or Provincial Loan Plan, or both. The attitudes of the four groups toward the interest-free-till graduation nature of loans, to possible maximum limits on loans a student can accumulate, and to a possible sex differential in maximum accumulated loans were studied in Questions 10 to 15 of the questionnaire.

The interest-free characteristic of loans was the topic for Question 10 and 11; Table 19 gives the data on agreement with this procedure. More than nine out of ten of the total group stated that loans should be interest-free till graduation or withdrawal from program, with between group variability ranging from 80.6% agreement of the general public to 95.5% for the student group. In support of this procedure, twenty-three persons (12 students, 7 parents, 3 general public, and 1 awards officer) noted that interest accumulating is discouraging and might affect one's decision to attend. An additional 14 students, 4 parents, and 1 general public commented that interest accumulating during attendance would result in a very large debt. Those objecting to interest-free loans commented that such loans encourage unnecessary borrowing (14 persons), some students borrow money "interest-free" and invest it (5 persons), and investment by society is like any other business transaction -- not interest free (8 persons). The overall conclusion here is one of very strong general support for the interest free characteristic of loans while the student is in attendance at a post-secondary institution.

Two thirds of the total group felt that there should be a limit on the amount of government loan debt that a student would be allowed to accumulate over his years in post-secondary education (Table 20). There was a rather marked difference in attitude on this question between the students, 59% of whom felt there should be a limit, and the general public, 82.9% of whom opted for a limit. Just under three-quarters of the parents and awards officers took this position. The most frequent comments made were: loan system is abused -- many students borrow more than they require (59 persons, including 43 students, 8 parents, 7 general public, and 1 awards officer); loans should be limited to basic needs of the student (39 persons, of whom 19 were parents); no limit if need is valid and achievement is satisfactory (31 persons, 21 of whom were students); large debt is burdensome so a limit is required (17 persons, of whom 11 were students); limit according to potential earnings of student (persons, mostly parents); and responsible students will not accumulate excessive debts (12 students).

Table 19
 Attitude Toward Interest Free Loans
 Till After Graduation

Question 10

Should loans be given which are interest-free until after a student graduates or leaves his program of study?

	Students N=426	Parents N=305	General Public N=155	Awards Officers N=50	Total Group N=936
1. yes	95.5%	94.8%	80.6%	92.0%	92.6%
2. undecided	0.7	1.3	3.9	2.0	1.5
3. no	3.8	3.9	15.5	6.0	5.9

Table 20
Opinion Regarding Limit on Accumulated Debt

Question 12

Should there be a limit on the amount of government loan debt that a student is allowed to accumulate over the years of post-secondary education?

	Students N=420	Parents N=303	General Public N=152	Awards Officers N=48	Total Group N=923
1. yes	59.0%	72.6%	82.9%	72.9%	68.1%
2. undecided	8.3	7.9	7.2	6.3	7.9
3. no	32.6	19.5	9.9	20.8	23.9

The most frequently suggested limit on debt is in the \$3000 to \$5000 range, with 50.6% of the total group suggesting these amounts. (Table 21) One quarter of the total group proposed amounts of \$2500 or less, and close to another quarter proposed other or no specific amounts. There was a tendency for the general public to propose lower limits than did the students, with the amounts suggested by the parents and awards officers falling between these two groups. Seventy-three persons (40 students, 24 parents, 7 general public, and 2 awards officers) commented that the limit should depend on the individual situation. Eighteen persons (5 students, 4 parents, 8 general public, 1 awards officer) suggested that the limit of debt should be based upon expected income. Another 25 persons, of whom 19 were parents, suggested that students should be relatively unrestricted in borrowing for their first degree, except in the case of medicine and dentistry, but quite restricted for a second degree.

Three quarters of the total group believe that there should not be a differential on accumulated debt between the sexes, as revealed in Table 22. Arguing for a lower accumulated debt limit for girls were 22.4% of the general public group, 18.2% of the parent group, 12.0% of the awards officers group, and 9.5% of the student group. The most frequent comments were: inequality of assistance is discrimination against the girls (41 persons, of whom 32 were students); girls are legally responsible (27 persons, 22 of whom were students); boys obtain better summer jobs than girls -- girls need at least as much aid if not more (21 persons, of whom 16 were students); an educated girl can contribute financially to marriage and repay her loan (20 persons, 13 of whom were students and 5 parents); and educational opportunity should be equal -- knowledge is not lost (15 persons, 6 of whom were students and 5 parents). The general and unmistakable conclusion here is that there should be no sex differentiation in the accumulated debt allowable.

Data on suggested maximal debt for girls proposed by those who felt their debt limit should be lower than that for boys are given in Table 23. For the total group of 136 respondents, the most popular maximum debt level for girls was in the \$1000 to \$2000 range.

Table 21
Suggested Limit on Accumulated Debt

Question 13

If you answered yes to number twelve, what should this upper limit of accumulated debt be? (Please indicate under "comments" the type of post-secondary institution you have in mind and the length of program.)

	Students N=227	Parents N=168	General Public N=93	Awards Officers N=29	Total Group N=517
1. \$500	0.0%	0.6%	1.1%	0.0%	0.4%
2. \$750	0.9	0.6	2.2	0.0	1.0
3. \$1000	3.5	8.9	5.4	0.0	5.4
4. \$1500	2.2	2.4	6.5	3.4	3.1
5. \$2000	8.8	11.3	9.7	10.3	9.9
6. \$2500	3.5	8.9	5.4	6.9	5.8
7. \$3000	13.7	17.3	9.7	17.2	14.3
8. \$4000	16.7	9.5	12.9	10.3	13.3
9. \$5000	25.6	21.4	20.4	20.7	23.0
10. other	25.1	19.0	26.9	31.0	23.8

Table 22
Possible Sex Differential on Accumulated Debt

Question 14

The accumulation of an educational debt by girls, a "negative dowry", is sometimes claimed to be a cause for concern, both by the girls contemplating post-secondary education and their parents. Do you think that the maximum allowable debt for girls should be lower than that for boys?

	Students N=423	Parents N=303	General Public N=152	Awards Officers N=50	Total Group N=928
1. yes	9.5%	18.2%	22.4%	12.0%	14.5%
2. undecided	6.9	10.2	13.2	8.0	9.1
3. no	83.7	71.6	64.5	80.0	76.4

Table 23
Suggested Limit on Accumulated Debt for Girls

Question 15

If you answered yes to number fourteen, what should the maximum allowable debt for girls be? Please explain the type and length of program as in question thirteen.

	Students N=45	Parents N=53	General Public N=32	Awards Officers N=6	Total Group N=136
1. \$500	6.7%	1.9%	3.1%	0.0%	3.7%
2. \$750	6.7	9.4	3.1	0.0	6.6
3. \$1000	11.1	26.4	25.0	16.7	20.6
4. \$2000	17.8	22.6	21.9	33.3	21.3
5. \$2500	8.9	11.3	6.3	0.0	8.8
6. \$3000	11.1	7.5	12.5	0.0	9.6
7. \$4000	11.1	5.7	9.4	16.7	8.8
8. \$5000	8.9	3.8	0.0	0.0	4.4
9. other	17.8	11.3	18.8	33.3	16.2

Chapter V

GRANT - LOAN CONSIDERATIONS

The problem of a suitable grant to loan ratio is a difficult one indeed. Should the initial assistance be in the form of a grant or a loan, and if in loan form, what should be the maximum amount of the initial loan? Should grant assistance be greater for those with higher marks, and if anticipated earnings on graduation are lower? Should the same basis and type of assistance apply for each year of a student's program? Questionnaire items 16 through 22 sought opinions on these issues.

Table 24 provides data on the suggested proportion of assistance by grants. Of the total group, 43.7% felt that about half the assistance should be in grant form, about one quarter (26.8%) felt that only a small portion of assistance should be in grant form, and one person in six (16.7%) proposed that the major portion of assistance should be in grants. Few persons in any of the groups suggested that all assistance should be in grants, and there was little variability among the groups on the option of the major portion of assistance being in grants; understandably the students were a little more in favor of this option than the general public! Almost half of the general public, 49.3%, felt that either no assistance or only a small portion should be in the form of grants; the corresponding percentages for students, parents, and awards officers were 28.4%, 31%, and 29.8% respectively. It may be somewhat surprising to some readers that over one quarter of the students and of their parents suggested low grants. The diversity of opinion within each of the groups on this issue is interesting. The most frequent comments made were: base grant on need (52 persons, including 31 students and 17 parents); base grant on need and achievement (41 persons, including 25 students and 8 parents); "need criterion equalizes opportunity and develops sense of values -- keep present policy (41 persons, including 18 students and 13 parents).

Table 25 presents data on reaction of the groups to various ratios of grant and loan. For each of the four groups and the total group the definite tendency is to favor a 50% or less grant rather than more than half the assistance in grant form. The percentages favoring 50% or less grant for the groups were as follows: Students - 68.6%; Parents - 81.0%; General Public - 74.5%; Awards Officers - 80%. The most frequent comments were: grant-loan ratio should depend on achievement (29 persons including 19 students); grant-loan ratio should be based on individual situation, including cost of program, handicaps, student living away from home, etc. (28 persons, including 17 students); and aid should be all loan-grant encourages financial irresponsibility (23 persons, including 9 students, 4 parents, and 10 general public).

The students were asked to indicate their degree of satisfaction with the grant-loan ratio in cases where both types of assistance were received. The data are presented in Table 26.

Table 24
Suggested Proportion of Assistance by Grants

Question 16

To what extent do you think students should receive assistance in the form of grants. (Present policy in Alberta - up to \$400 in grant - based solely on need, not on achievement.) Keep in mind that grants are not repayable and that money for grants comes from taxes.

	Students N=402	Parents N=281	General Public N=144	Awards Officers N=47	Total Group N=874
1. All assistance should be in grant form.	4.7%	5.7%	5.6%	2.1%	5.0%
2. The major portion of assistance should be in grants.	19.4	14.6	13.2	17.0	16.7
3. About half of the assistance given should be in grant form.	46.5	46.6	27.8	51.1	43.7
4. Only a small portion of assistance should be in grant.	25.4	24.6	34.7	27.7	26.8
5. No assistance should be in the grant form.	3.0	6.4	14.6	2.1	5.9
6. I have no opinion.	1.0	2.1	4.2	0.0	1.8

Table 25
Suggested Proportions of Grants and Loans

Question 19

When both loan and grant are given to a student, what percentage of the assistance should be grant and what percentage should be in loan?

	Students N=385	Parents N=263	General Public N=122	Awards Officers N=45	Total Group N=815
1. 25% grant-75% loan	20.3%	20.5%	38.5%	20.0%	23.1%
2. 40% grant-60% loan	21.3	17.5	9.8	24.4	18.5
3. 50% grant-50% loan	7.0	43.0	26.2	35.6	32.5
4. 60% grant-40% loan	10.4	5.3	7.4	8.9	8.2
5. 75% grant-25% loan	9.1	7.2	6.6	6.7	8.0
6. other	11.9	6.5	11.5	4.4	9.7

Table 26
Degree of Satisfaction with Grant-Loan Ratio

Question 28

If you received part loan and part grant, were you satisfied with the amount of grant compared to the amount of loan (i.e. the grant-loan ratio)?

Student
N=147

1. I was very satisfied with the grant-loan ratio.	40.8%
2. I was moderately satisfied.	27.2
3. I have no opinion.	6.8
4. I was dissatisfied.	12.9
5. I was very dissatisfied.	12.2

Two students out of five were very satisfied with the ratio they received, and an additional 27.2% were moderately satisfied. This totals to two thirds (68%) who were at least moderately satisfied. On the other side of the ledger were a quarter of the students who were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the ratio. The most frequent comment made was that the grant was too low; it should have been the basic \$400. These students apparently viewed the maximum grant of \$400 as the basic grant and were concerned that they did not receive the full amount.

Wide diversity of opinion is evident on the issue of whether the initial assistance should be in the form of a loan or a grant, as revealed in Table 27. Students and parents are pretty evenly split on this issue, whereas the general public and awards officers are much more inclined to a loan as the initial form of assistance. In the total group half favor loans first whereas two in five favor grants first with one in ten having no opinion. Table 28 gives the distribution of suggested initial loans. For the total group the two most popular loan values were \$500 and \$750, with few persons proposing loan values of \$250 or less. Three persons in ten (29%) proposed other values or no specific loan values. The comments made suggest, however, that there may have been some confusion between the maximum initial loan made and the maximum total loan made in any one year. For example, 36 persons, including 19 students and 12 parents, suggested that the maximum loan should be based on need and could range between \$1000 and \$1500. There is sufficient doubt about these data to invalidate their use.

The majority of respondents believe that as long as a student has satisfactory marks he should be eligible for the same amount of non-repayable assistance as a student with high marks. The data are presented in Table 29. Almost two-thirds of the total group hold this view. Just over a quarter of the total group (27.8%) believe that the amount of non-repayable assistance should be tied to academic average. It is interesting to note that the students are more inclined to make the amount of non-repayable assistance conditional on academic average than are parents, the general public, and awards officers. However, the inclusion of grants and scholarships together in the general term "non-repayable assistance" may have confused the issue somewhat; scholarships are always contingent upon academic standing whereas grants may or may not be. The most frequent comments made were: marks do not always indicate effort and potential (44 persons, including 32 students and 10 parents); reward achievement on a sliding scale to provide incentive to work (44 persons, including 35 students and 7 parents); base grant on need and satisfactory marks (39 persons, including 36 students); and students with high marks get scholarships and do not need grants.

Table 27
Suggested Form of Initial Assistance

Question 17

In some provinces, when a student applies for assistance, the first portion is given in the form of a loan, then an additional non-repayable grant may be given. (For example, a student applying for \$500 might receive \$350 in loan form and \$150 in grant form or a student applying for \$300 might receive \$300 in loan.)

	Students N=403	Parents N=279	General Public N=147	Awards Officers N=47	Total Group N=876
1. I agree that the initial assistance should be in the form of a loan.	44.2%	49.8%	68.7%	68.1%	51.4%
2. I feel that the initial assistance should be in the form of a grant.	44.2	41.6	24.5	29.8	39.3
3. I have no opinion.	11.7	8.6	6.8	2.1	9.4

Table 28
 Suggested Limit on Loan if this is the
 Initial Form of Assistance

Question 18

If the first type of assistance is to be loan what maximum amount of loan would you suggest?

	Students N=241	Parents N=149	General Public N=96	Awards Officers N=31	Total Group N=517
1. \$100	2.1%	0.0%	0.0%	3.2%	1.2%
2. \$150	0.8	0.7	1.0	0.0	0.8
3. \$200	0.8	4.0	0.0	16.1	2.5
4. \$250	2.1	2.0	4.2	3.2	2.5
5. \$300	2.9	4.7	11.5	16.1	5.8
6. \$400	7.9	8.7	11.5	9.7	8.9
7. \$500	20.7	26.2	20.8	16.1	22.1
8. \$600	8.3	6.7	7.3	6.5	7.5
9. \$750	19.5	21.5	19.8	12.9	19.7
10. other	34.9	25.5	24.0	16.1	29.0

Table 29
Possible Differential in Non-Repayable Assistance
Based on Academic Achievement

Question 20

What is your reaction to the following statement?

Students with above average academic achievement should be given a greater proportion of their assistance in non-repayable form (i.e. grant, scholarship) than should students with lower marks.

	Students N=416	Parents N=299	General Public N=146	Awards Officers N=49	Total Group N=910
1. I agree with the above statement.	37.0%	19.7%	20.5%	20.4%	27.8%
2. As long as a student has satisfactory marks he should be eligible for the same amount of grant as a student with high marks.	55.3	72.9	69.9	77.6	64.6
3. Non-repayable assistance should be given only to students with above average marks.	1.4	0.7	1.4	0.0	1.1
4. Other "comments".	6.0	5.0	7.5	2.0	5.7
5. I have no opinion on the matter.	0.2	1.7	0.7	0.0	0.8

Considerable diversity of opinion exists on whether or not financial assistance should be given on the same basis in all years of a students' program. (Table 30) For the total group, 44.6% believe that assistance should be on the same basis for each year, whereas one third of the group (33.6%) feel that the student should be required to take more of this assistance in loan form in the early years of his program because he has not yet "proved" himself. Awards officers are the most inclined to recommend the same basis for each year (58.3%) and the general public the least likely to recommend this alternative (36.2%). Comments most frequently made were the following: evaluate each year separately on the basis of need (39 persons, 33 of whom were students); student potential is greater in third and fourth years and warrants more grant (28 persons, 26 of whom were students); and convert loan to grant on the basis of achievement (12 persons, including 5 students and 4 parents).

The final issue dealt with here is possible greater grants to those whose anticipated earnings upon graduation are lower. The data are presented in Table 31. Three out of five of the total group (59.7%) either disagree or strongly disagree with this proposal, whereas just over a quarter (27.1%) are in some measure of agreement. There is little variability in opinion between groups, all of whom show greater disagreement than agreement with the proposal, and about one person in eight in the "undecided" category. Most frequent comments were the following: such a policy would be too difficult to implement -- relative earning power varies even within professions (43 persons, including 21 students, 12 parents, 7 general public, and 3 award officers); no adjustment is necessary because length of program and amount of assistance are directly related to earning power (35 persons, including 25 students and 9 parents); and such a policy discriminates against faculties by forcing students into lower paying professions (12 persons, 10 of whom were students).

Table 30
Possible Differential in Assistance for
Different Years of Program

Question 21

Should financial assistance be given on the same basis in all years of an individual's post-secondary program? For example, should a student in the first year of a four year program be eligible for the same type and amount of assistance as a student in the fourth year of a program? Indicate which of the following best describes your opinion.

	Students N=418	Parents N=294	General Public N=149	Awards Officers N=48	Total Group N=909
1. Financial assistance should be given on the same basis for all years of post-secondary education.	47.6%	42.2%	36.2%	58.3%	44.6%
2. A student in early years of his program should be required to take the major portion of assistance in loan because he must prove himself before non-repayable money is allotted to him.	32.3	35.0	36.2	27.1	33.6
3. A student in the early years of his program should be given the major portion of his assistance in grant form because he has enough to worry about without the burden of going into debt.	4.1	9.2	13.4	4.2	7.3
4. Other	9.1	4.4	10.1	4.2	7.5
5. I am undecided in this issue.	6.9	9.2	4.0	6.3	7.2

Table 31
 Possible Larger Grants to Students with Lower
 Anticipated Earnings upon Graduation

Question 22

What is your reaction to the following: An individual with a lower expected earning power after graduation should be given a greater portion of assistance in grant form than should an individual with a relatively greater expected earning power.

	Students N=422	Parents N=294	General Public N=149	Awards Officers N=46	Total Group N=911
1. strongly agree	7.1%	4.8%	6.0%	6.5%	6.1%
2. agree	18.2	22.8	24.2	23.9	21.0
3. undecided	13.7	15.0	8.1	13.0	13.2
4. disagree	39.6	46.6	47.0	41.3	43.1
5. strongly disagree	21.3	10.9	14.8	15.2	16.6

Chapter VI

CONCLUSIONS

The following conclusions appear to be warranted by the data:

1. There is considerable diversity of views on the policy issue concerned with primary responsibility for financing post-secondary education. Many persons questioned noted that this was primarily the responsibility of parents and the student, whereas a comparable number disagreed with this policy, believing the responsibility to lie with society generally. However, there was general recognition of a social responsibility on the part of parents to help finance their children's education as far as their circumstances permit. It can be concluded that both the individual and society have an important stake in post-secondary education and both should contribute to it.
2. There was general satisfaction with the financial aid program as it has been operating in Alberta, and it has been meeting a very important need. Many students could not have attended post-secondary institutions without it.
3. There is a strong feeling that tuition fees should not be eliminated. This is true for all four groups studied -- students, parents, general public, and awards officers. One can only conclude from these results that the requirement of a tuition fee continues to be considered important.
4. Annual taxable income appears to be the best basis for determining parental contribution to post-secondary education. Exemption from such payment should be provided, however, for low income parents. On the other hand there should be no maximum contribution expected from a high income family for education of their children.
5. Loans should continue to be interest-free until the student graduates or leaves his program. There is support for considering a maximum level of debt that a student would be allowed to accumulate. This maximum level should not be related to sex, i.e. girls should be allowed to accumulate as much debt as boys.
6. There is a distinct preference for grants to form 50% or less of the total assistance received by students. Wide diversity of opinion is present on whether the student should receive a grant or a loan as his first type of assistance; no clear cut conclusion on this issue is possible from the data, though the general public and awards officers would prefer a loan first.

7. No conclusion is possible on whether or not financial assistance should be given on the same basis for each year of the student's program. The strongest option preferred was to allocate assistance on the same basis for each year, but a rather close second option was to require students in their early years of the program to take more assistance in loan form.

APPENDIX A

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

STUDY OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE
TO
POST-SECONDARY STUDENTS

THE STUDENTS ASSISTANCE BOARD

Department of Education

Government of Alberta

Edmonton, Alberta

The Students Assistance Board is carrying out a study concerning the allocation of financial assistance to post-secondary students under the direction of Dr. Donald C. Fair, Department of Educational Psychology, the University of Alberta.

Part of the study deals with the attitudes of various groups of people toward student financial aid. Your frank responses to the questions will be much appreciated and held confidential. Results of this study will be used in a review of the policies of the Students Assistance Board in allocating financial aid to students. It is for this reason that your responses are so important to us.

October, 1968

It is for this reason that responses are so important to us. If we are to make a significant contribution to the study of second grade reading, we must be sure to include in our research a study of the relationship between reading achievement and reading comprehension. This is a task which requires a great deal of time and effort, but it is one which is well worth the effort. The results of such a study will help us to better understand the reading process and to develop more effective reading programs for our students.

THE STUDENTS' VACATION BOARD

Department of Education

Department of Education

STUDENTS ASSISTANCE BOARD

Department of Education

"Study of financial assistance for post-secondary students"

Please answer each question by checking (✓) the choice at the right which best describes your opinion. A space is provided for your comments.

1. The policy of many provincial governments is that the primary responsibility for financing education beyond high school rests with the parents and the student. How do you react to this policy?

Comments:

strongly agree (1)

agree (2)

undecided (3)

disagree (4)

strongly disagree (5)

2. React to the following statement: Parents, if family circumstances permit, should be expected to pay a major portion of their children's post-secondary education costs.

Comments:

strongly agree (1)

agree _____ (2)

undecided _____ (3)

disagree _____ (4)

strongly disagree (5)

3. The basis for assessing the expected contribution from parents should be the total annual taxable income of the parents from all sources. (Taxable income is not total earnings. It is the amount of income remaining after all allowable deductions, for example, for dependents, charitable donations etc., have been made.) How do you feel about this?

Comments:

strongly agree _____ (1)

agree (2)

undecided _____ (3)

disagree _____ (4)

strongly disagree _____ (5)

4. In your opinion, should parents be exempted from contribution if their taxable income falls below a certain limit?

Comments: yes _____ (1)
no _____ (2)

5. If you answered yes in question four, what should this lower limit be?

Comments: \$200 _____ (1)
\$300 _____ (2)
\$500 _____ (3)
\$750 _____ (4)
\$1000 _____ (5)
\$1500 _____ (6)
\$2000 _____ (7)
\$2500 _____ (8)
other - please give amount under "comments" _____ (9)
no opinion _____ (10)

6. Should there be a maximum amount that parents, including those who could afford to pay the total cost, be expected to contribute towards their children's education beyond high school?

Comments: yes _____ (1)
undecided _____ (2)
no _____ (3)

7. If you agree with number six, what should this maximum be for each year?

Comments:	less than \$200	_____	(1)
	between \$200 and \$400	_____	(2)
	between \$400 and \$600	_____	(3)
	between \$600 and \$800	_____	(4)
	between \$800 and \$1000	_____	(5)
	between \$1000 and \$1200	_____	(6)
	between \$1200 and \$1500	_____	(7)
	more than \$1500	_____	(8)
	other - please give amount under "comments"	_____	(9)
	no opinion	_____	(10)

8. Could you suggest a way or ways other than taxable income in which parental contribution might be determined? If yes, briefly describe method and indicate how much this contribution should be.

Comments:	yes	_____	(1)
	no	_____	(2)

9. How would you react to the following statement? "In awarding financial assistance a parental statement of income and of expenditures, as well as a student budget, should be examined by the awarding committee in order to determine parental contribution."

Comments:	strongly agree	_____	(1)
	agree	_____	(2)
	undecided	_____	(3)
	disagree	_____	(4)
	strongly disagree	_____	(5)

10. Should loans be given which are interest-free until after a student graduates or leaves his program of study?

Comments:

yes (1)

undecided (2)

no (3)

11. If you answered no in question number ten, please explain why.

Comments:

12. Should there be a limit on the amount of government loan debt that a student is allowed to accumulate over the years of post-secondary education?

Comments:

yes (1)

undecided (2)

no (3)

13. If you answered yes to number twelve, what should this upper limit of accumulated debt be? (Please indicate under "comments" the type of post-secondary institution you have in mind and the length of program.)

Comments:

\$500 (1)

\$750 (2)

\$1000 (3)

\$1500 (4)

\$2000 (5)

\$2500 (6)

\$3000 (7)

\$4,000 (8)

\$5000 (9)

other - please give amount under "comments" (10)

14. The accumulation of an educational debt by girls, a "negative dowry", is sometimes claimed to be a cause for concern, both by the girls contemplating post-secondary education and their parents. Do you think that the maximum allowable debt for girls should be lower than that for boys?

Comments:

yes (1)

undecided (2)

no (3)

15. If you answered yes to number fourteen, what should the maximum allowable debt for girls be? Please explain the type and length of program as in question thirteen.

Comments:

\$500 (1)

\$750 (2)

\$1000 (3)

\$2000 (4)

\$3000 (6)

\$4000 (7)

\$5000 (8)

other - please give amount under "comments" _____ (9)

16. To what extent do you think students should receive assistance in the form of grants. (Present policy in Alberta - up to \$400 in grant - based solely on need, not on achievement.) Keep in mind that grants are not repayable and that money for grants comes from taxes.

The major portion of assistance should be in grants (2)

About half of the assistance given should be in grant form. (3)

Only a small portion of assistance should be in grant (4)

COMMERCIAL

17. In some provinces, when a student applies for assistance, the first portion is given in the form of a loan, then an additional non-repayable grant may be given. (For example, a student applying for \$500 might receive \$350 in loan form and \$150 in grant form or a student applying for \$300 might receive \$300 in loan.)

Comments:

18. If the first type of assistance is to be loan what maximum amount of loan would you suggest?

Comments:	\$100	_____	(1)
	\$150	_____	(2)
	\$200	_____	(3)
	\$250	_____	(4)
	\$300	_____	(5)
	\$400	_____	(6)
	\$500	_____	(7)
	\$600	_____	(8)
	\$750	_____	(9)
	other - please give amount under "comments"	_____	(10)

19. When both loan and grant are given to a student, what percentage of the assistance should be grant and what percentage should be in loan?

Comments: 25% grant - 75% loan _____ (1)
 40% grant - 60% loan _____ (2)
 50% grant - 50% loan _____ (3)
 60% grant - 40% loan _____ (4)
 75% grant - 25% loan _____ (5)
 other - please give rates under "comments" _____ (6)

20. What is your reaction to the following statement? Students with above average academic achievement should be given a greater portion of their assistance in non-repayable form (i.e. grant, scholarship) than should students with lower marks.

Comments:

21. Should financial assistance be given on the same basis in all years of an individual's post-secondary program? For example, should a student in the first year of a four-year program be eligible for the same type and amount of assistance as a student in the fourth year of a program? Indicate which of the following best describes your opinion.

Comments:

22. What is your reaction to the following: An individual with a lower expected earning power after graduation should be given a greater portion of assistance in grant form than should an individual with a relatively greater expected earning power.

Comments:

strongly agree _____ (1)
agree _____ (2)
undecided _____ (3)
disagree _____ (4)
strongly disagree _____ (5)

23. Some people argue that student tuition fees in post-secondary institutions should be eliminated and that this cost should be borne entirely by the taxpayer. How do you feel about this?

Comments:

strongly agree _____ (1)
agree _____ (2)
undecided _____ (3)
disagree _____ (4)
strongly disagree _____ (5)

24. React to the following statement: No student should have to interrupt his or her post-secondary education for financial reasons.

Comments:

strongly agree _____ (1)
agree _____ (2)
undecided _____ (3)
disagree _____ (4)
strongly disagree _____ (5)
other - please specify under "comments" _____ (6)

25. In your opinion, when should an individual be considered as financially independent of his parents as far as paying the cost of post-secondary education is concerned. Indicate one or more of the following.

At the start of post-secondary education	_____	(1)
At age 18.	_____	(2)
At age 21.	_____	(3)
When he or she is no longer living at home	_____	(4)
When he or she gets married.	_____	(5)
He or she should not be expected to be financially independent as long as he or she is going to post-secondary school	_____	(6)
It depends on the individual's particular situation.	_____	(7)
A combination of the above or other (describe under "comments") . . .	_____	(8)

Comments:

26. Opinions appear to differ about whether it is society or the individual that stands to gain from post-secondary education. Some feel that it is the individual who benefits the most, others feel it is society, and still others claim that the individual and society benefit equally. What do you think?

Society benefits the most.	_____	(1)
The individual benefits the most	_____	(2)
Society and the individual benefit equally	_____	(3)
Society and the individual are so inseparable that such a question cannot be answered.	_____	(4)
No opinion	_____	(5)

Comments:

QUESTIONS FOR PARENTS ONLY

10.

27. Which of the following best describes the effect of receiving financial assistance from the government upon your family?

The amount of loan imposed no burden on the family.....
The loan imposed a slight burden on the family, but no
intolerable.....
The loan imposed a considerable financial burden upon the
family.....
I am undecided on this matter.....

Comments:

28. Student Assistance Board records indicate that you have one or more children who received financial assistance in the 1967-68 year. The amount of assistance given was based in part upon an expected contribution from you. From what sources did this contribution come? Mark the three most important sources in order (i.e. 1, 2, 3,).

regular income _____
savings specifically set aside _____
general savings and other assets (property, stocks, etc.) _____
loan from bank or other agency _____
mother went to work specifically for this purpose _____
father took an extra job or worked longer hours _____
other - please explain under "comments" _____

Comments:

QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS ONLY

10.

27. Students Assistance Board records indicate that you received financial assistance during 1967-68. In your opinion, was the assistance you were given

inadequate _____ (1)

adequate to cover needs _____ (2)

more than adequate to cover needs _____ (3)

Comments:

28. If you received part loan and part grant, were you satisfied with the amount of grant compared to the amount of loan (i.e. the grant-loan ratio)?

I was very satisfied with the grant-loan ratio..... _____ (1)
I was moderately satisfied..... _____ (2)
I have no opinion..... _____ (3)
I was dissatisfied..... _____ (4)
I was very dissatisfied..... _____ (5)

Comments:

29. Which of the following statements best describes your opinion of the importance of the assistance given you?

I could not have continued my education without the assistance given..... _____ (1)
The assistance was a great help and I would have been hard-pressed to get by without it..... _____ (2)
I could have managed without assistance but it did make finances a little less pressured..... _____ (3)
The assistance was not really needed but it was nice to have..... _____ (4)
Other - please explain under "comments" _____ (5)

Comments:

QUESTION FOR GENERAL PUBLIC AND
AWARDS OFFICERS ONLY

10.

27. In the space provided below, please state any additional ideas or opinions that you have regarding financial assistance to students.

Comments:

QUESTION FOR PARENTS ONLY

11.

29. Which of the following statements best describes your opinion of the importance of assistance given your son or daughter?

Our son or daughter could not have attended a post-secondary institute without the assistance. _____

The assistance was a great help and we would have been hard-pressed to get by without it. _____

We could have managed without assistance but it did make finances a little less pressured. _____

The assistance was not really needed but it was nice to have. _____

Other - please explain under "comments". _____

Comments:

